Useful links and places:

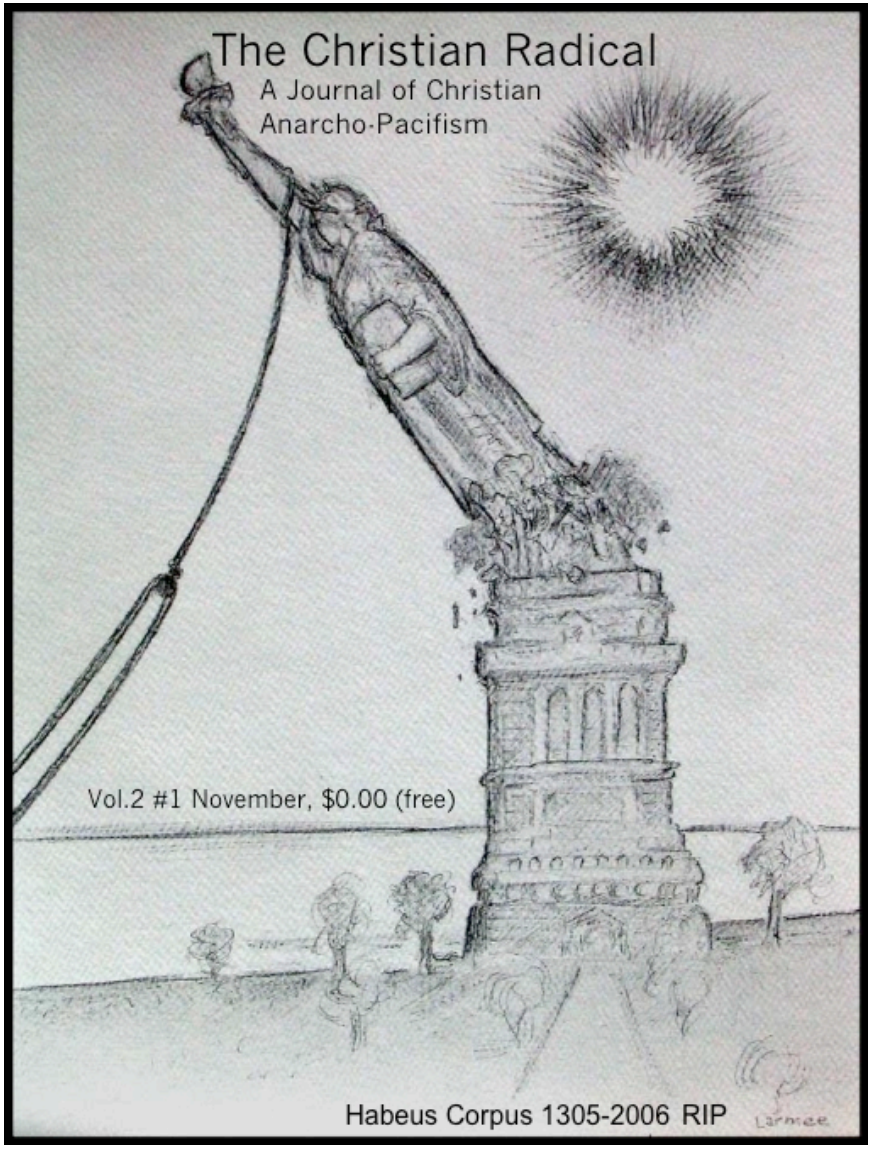
-Catholic Worker Websites:
www.catholicworker.com
www.catholicworker.org
www.lacatholicworker.org
www.ca.geocities.com/vancouvercatholicworker
www.catholicworker.com/bookstore/index.html

-Radical/Progressive Christianity
www.jesusradicals.org
www.nonviolentjesus.blogspot.com
www.geezmagazine.org
www.catholicanarchy.org
www.anglocatholicsocialism.org
www.disseminary.org
www.tierra-nueva.org
www.romancatholicwomenpriests.com

-Anti-War
www.stopwar.ca
www.ivaw.net
www.resisters.ca
www.wri-irg.org
www.christianpacifism.com
www.plowsharesactions.org

-Activism
www.foodnotbombs.net
www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook
www.iww.org
www.deathpenalty.org
www.freegan.info/?page=home
www.justicia4migrantworkers.org

-Other Good Websites:
www.vancouverdiy.com
www.pcac.net/indexn.html
www.southcentralfarmers.com
www.commongroundrelief.org
www.freewebs.com/stormnyc/index.htm
www.jonahhouse.org

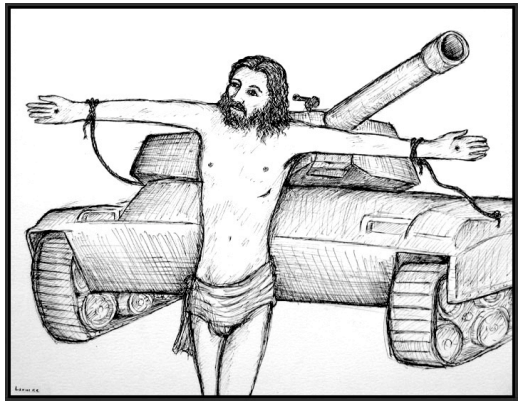


CATHOLIC WORKER STATEMENT TO U.S. CATHOLIC BISHOPS

"At the conclusion of National Catholic Worker Gathering, held from October 19-22 in Panora, Iowa, Catholic Workers from across the U.S. issued a statement appealing to the U.S. Catholic Bishops to break their silence and to call for an immediate end to the U.S. War in Iraq and Afghanistan... Over 300 Catholic Workers from over fifty houses, including from Germany and Holland, attended the Catholic Worker Gathering. The Catholic Worker was founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933, and the late John Cardinal O'Connor initiated a process in the catholic Church for her sainthood."

--Exerpted from the news release, which accompanied the Catholic Worker statement, ED.

We are Catholic Workers from across the US and Europe who have come to Iowa to celebrate special anniversaries of a number of our houses, to pray and reflect about what God calls us to at this critical moment in history, and to recommit ourselves to the Catholic Worker vision of creating a new society in the shell of the old.



In our various communities we have daily contact with the victims of our society. Thus, we strive to do the works of mercy and to follow Jesus' command to be non-violent witnesses for peace and justice. As we confront the unrelenting violence and assaults on human life and our endangered earth, we repent for our own complicity in our culture of violence, and call on our church and all people of faith and goodwill to do the same. Taking the Sermon on the Mount as our Christian manifesto, we commit ourselves to upholding the sacredness of all life wherever it is threatened.

As a world community, we find ourselves in a complex and dangerous moral crisis. Longstanding cultural compulsions have obscured the basic teachings of Christ. We have become the wealthiest nation on earth in the history of humankind and the price we have paid is the collective loss of our souls. The ongoing efforts of militarization and exploitation of global resources have pushed us to a level of accepting the unacceptable. Pre-emptive war and the slaughter of innocents is being carried out in our names and for profit. A creeping apathy has allowed room for extreme abuses such as torture and the destruction of whole social fabrics. We are violating our own spiritual principles and civil laws to attain excessive creature comforts while others suffer from unimaginable deprivation and violence. We are a living a lifestyle that demands war and distracts from our true calling of loving and caring for one another. Our path to redemption lies in the repudiation of domination and embracing the daily need of service to the vulnerable.

The teaching of Saint Paul tells us that when the health of one member of our community is suffering, the health of the whole body is lowered. We must make this time of crisis into an opportunity to move forward and carry on Christ's message without compromise. In the face of nuclear capabilities we have no other choice. God, the victims, and timeless prophetic voices call on us, the Church, the body of Christ, to repent from the sins of war, torture, and killing, from the making of widows and orphans, and from the fruitless works of darkness resulting in this last century being the bloodiest on record.

We as Christians recognize that the Christ, whom we worship, was himself a victim of torture. We are called to end his ongoing crucifixion, which has been made manifest in our nations policies. This is particularly relevant in the latest Military Commissions Act of 2006. It is with burning sorrow that we look around at the world in which we live at the suffering, war, torture, and killing of our brothers and sisters, and realize that the response of both ourselves and our Church has been wholly inadequate. We cry out to be part of a Church that prays and works for peace, loves our enemies, and embraces the redemptive power of forgiveness. We cry out for a church that speaks without fear of consequences, including loss of revenues.

We understand that we live in a time of great fear and peril. We need to remind ourselves that we are not to fear those that can kill the body, but instead to fear those that can kill the soul. Our domestic and foreign policies have left us a nation without a soul.

We call on our Church to be a prophetic voice, a sanctuary, and a source of encouragement to those who want to work together in community towards peace and justice. To this we recommend:

- **Prayer, fasting, vigiling and non-violent civil resistance to end the military occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan.**
- **That all soldiers refuse to participate in these wars.**
- **That the Church actively support and encourage all conscientious objectors.**
- **That all U.S. military and private contractors refuse to engage in the torture of prisoners.**
- **The closing of Guantanamo and other secret U.S. military prisons.**
- **The eradication of the Military Commissions Act of 2006.**
- **The redirection of our resources from war making and exploitation to meeting human needs and saving our planet.**
- **The equitable redistribution of resources by simplifying our materialistic lifestyle.**
- **That all people of faith and goodwill join us for a non-violent action in Washington, DC on January 11, 2007, the 5th anniversary of the first prisoners arriving at Guantanamo, to call for its closing.**

As we approach this season of Advent and Christmas, let us be people of Light. "The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it" (John 1:5). <

Bestowed with Charity, Robbed of Dignity:
My Week in a Vancouver Homeless Shelter
By Tavis Dodds

Two things made me decide to spend a week in an emergency shelter for men: The first thing was when Vancouver Burrard MLA Lorne Mayencourt spoke to the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, at The Four Seasons Hotel. Mayencourt wants to make a detox center in a rural area for substance abuse victims to be put to work. The idea is based on the model of an Italian institution in San Patrigano that Mayencourt visited last January. The other thing that influenced me to check myself into a shelter was the much-publicized trips of Vancouver and Victoria mayors to tour European facilities to see how they deal with poverty.

I found myself wondering that with all these trips, how many of our wealthy leaders have even bothered to see what life is like in their own backyard? So I set off to document a week in the shelter over top the offices of the Diocese of Vancouver, and what I found was enough to challenge my faith in the church.

It is eight at night when I climb up the two and a half flight of steps. Substance abuse victims fidget in the corners. An old man struggles up one step at a time. The windowsills are littered with bits of aluminum foil and scratch-and-wins. When I get to the top a man behind a plexi-glass window takes my name and tells me to come back at midnight.

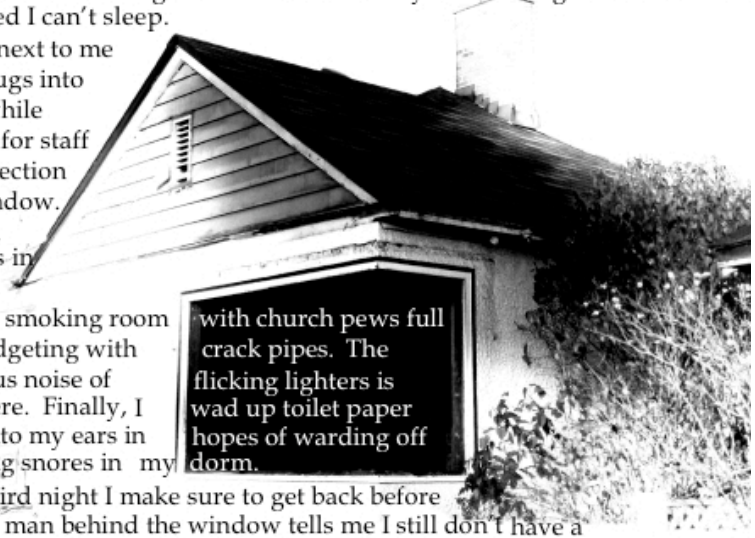
At 12:10 there are 7 men under the sign depicting Jesus holding a lamb. A man's voice comes through a little box on the wall and calls out three names including mine; the other men are turned away. Five minutes later a man opens the door and we climb up the stairs.

We get buzzed through the door at the top and wait as each man is asked for his name, Social Insurance Number, birth date, and signature. Each of us gets two sheets, a blanket, and a pillowcase. 100 men sleep in four dorms with rows of a dozen beds down each wall. The beds are about 1 ½ feet apart.

I find my bed between a substance abuse victim that can't stop fidgeting and a tidy, young South East Asian man. The room smells of dirty socks, my neighbour never stops moving about, and several men snore, but I am tired and I'm asleep by 1:00.

At 6:00 the lights come on, morning radio comes through the intercom, and a voice says "First call for meal tickets." I line up to sign for seven dollars in meal tickets and then stagger down the stairs and out into the cold. Many of the men are waiting for McDonald's to open so they can use their meal tickets. I decide to opt for the Senior's center and get a special omelet breakfast for my pink and white tickets, leaving me with a green $3.25.

When I get back to the shelter at 8:30 the man at the window tells me I don't have a bed and that I should have been back before 8. There is an old sign on the door that says "Ministry referrals only after 4:00. Self- referrals only after 8:00." so I thought I had to be back after 8. I come back at midnight but this time the voice does not come out of the little box on the wall until nearly 1:00. This time I get a bed illuminated by the light from the hall. I'm so tired I can't sleep.



The man next to me injects drugs into himself while watching for staff in the reflection in the window. Two men play cards in the hall. There is a smoking room with church pews full of men fidgeting with crack pipes. The continuous noise of flicking lighters is everywhere. Finally, I wad up toilet paper to stuff into my ears in hopes of warding off the roaring snores in my dorm.

On the third night I make sure to get back before 8:00. The man behind the window tells me I still don't have a bed booked and to come back at midnight. If I want a bed, he says, I should get a referral from welfare. I overhear a man arguing that he works and can't go to welfare. The staff explains to him that this is a business and if they don't get welfare referrals, they don't get paid.

The next morning I go to welfare and ask for a referral to the shelter. The man at the window tells me that they can't write a referral but he gives me a paper with an appointment time for a meeting with a social worker. He tells me that the shelter will like to see this.

At the Gathering Place Downtown Community Center I meet a man in the cafeteria line up. Dinner is $3.75 so I have to supplement my green ticket with fifty cents, but it is a big meal. The man tells me that dinner used to be $3.25, but it went up a year ago.

He stayed at the shelter nearly ten years ago and tells me that he got seven dollars in meal tickets back then too. He says he doesn't do drugs, drink, or gamble. He tells me of how he's been staying at the shelter for more than three months and working for a granite business in Richmond for six weeks. Welfare refused to give him a referral because he works so he had to check in at midnight every night. Finally, he started forging the referrals. He says he's really looking forward to getting out of the shelter, but he has no time to look for a place. He works six days a week moving granite slabs, and he only has a chance to shower on Sundays. If he can't find a place to rent soon he's just going to buy a camper and live on the parking lot at his work.

I show the man at the desk my appointment slip and he checks me in for a month. From then on I have the security of knowing my bed will be there. I also get a locker, but I must provide my own lock. My neighbour, a man so twitchy he looks like he's been ingesting bug poison, tells me I'd better get a lock because the place is full of thieves. Somebody had stolen his work boots before he'd had a chance to buy a lock and he's been out of work ever since. I try the showers. Bits of toilet paper are all over the floor. A man is rinsing his socks in the sink and complaining that it takes more that two days for them to dry. There are no doors on the two toilet stalls. The toilet seat is melted. No matter where I stand in the shower room, I'm visible from the dorm. There is no control on the shower, only a button that must be pressed every minute to continue the flow of hot water. I use my sweater as a towel.

If men can come up with a dollar they can use the private showers and laundry facilities at the Gathering Place. They give me two towels and soap. One man gives me a pair of socks and says that it is not in the center's mandate to issue socks so I shouldn't expect another pair for a month. As I'm showering I notice itchy little welts on my wrists and ankles.

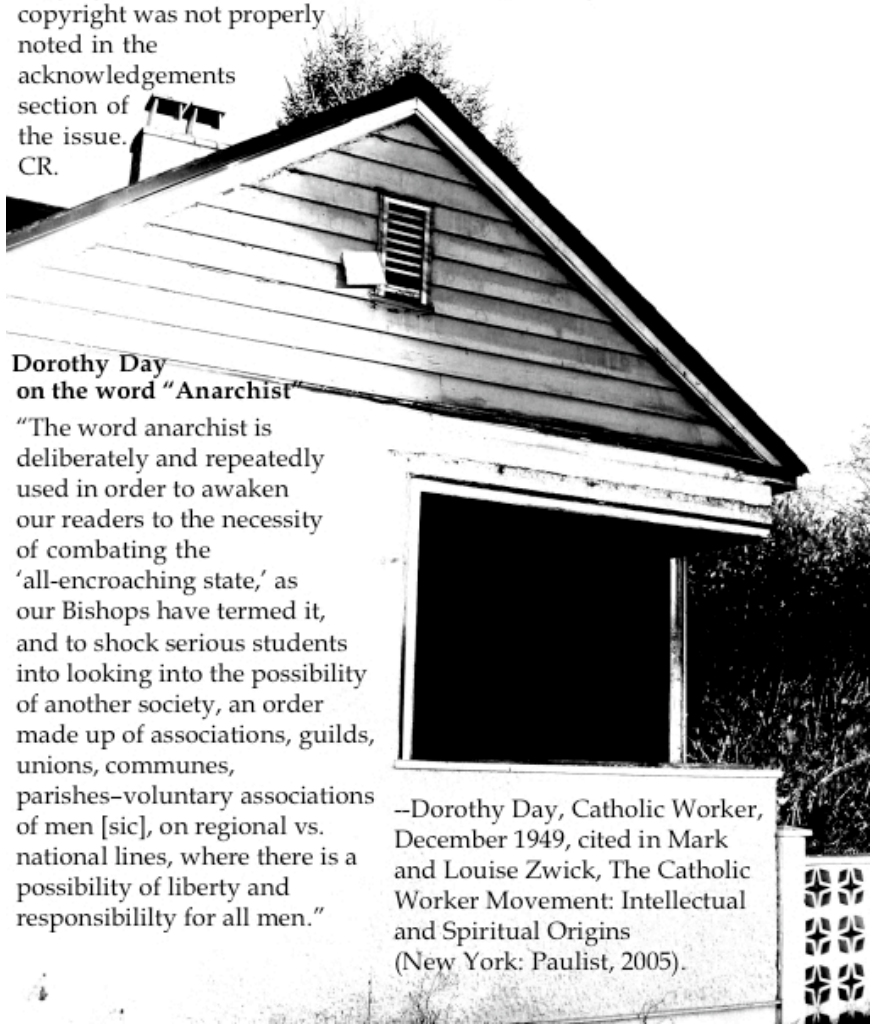
That night I ask my neighbour about the welts and he tells me that they're bed bug bites and that our dorm has them pretty bad. I hadn't noticed them before, but now I can feel the little creatures crawling all over me. I take my bedding into the smoking room but I can't find any.

Finally, I manage to catch one, full of blood and therefore slower. It's nearly a centimeter long and looks like a tiny crab, normally flat but after they feed they swell up to an oval shape. The man on one side of me says that they don't bother him; he can feel them moving, but they don't bite him. The man on my other side is tormented. He has incredible swelling up and down both arms. That night he puts on all his clothes, even gloves, and tucks his pants into his socks. He pulls the drawstring of his hood tight and all you can see of him is his face. The next morning his face is swollen with bites. He complains to the staff at the front and they tell him that they are aware of the problem. He goes to a clinic and they give him two squirts of calamine lotion that does no good. I decide to throw away all my clothes when my time is up. That night we form a hunting party and kill many of the little parasites living in the seams of our mattresses, but they are fast and it is suspected that they are hiding in the ventilation system and in the cracks of the old building.

The next morning I decide to attend the morning Eucharist at the Holy Rosary Cathedral. I remember once, years ago, I had come into that cathedral and noticed that the tired were granted sanctuary and allowed to lie down in the pews. The policy must have changed because there is nobody sleeping in the pews anymore. The sermon is about how we should not be too poor or too rich. If we decide to become too poor, the priest says, we will become angry.

The next day it rains. They say it will rain for a week. The choking stench of rotting feet is unbearable. I decide to take the priest's advice and never become too poor, leaving my brothers behind in their church sanctioned hell. <

Correction from Vol. 1 issue 12: Permission to use the article by Thom Hartmann titled "Reclaiming the Issues, Islamic or Republican Fascism" was given on the condition that we note his copyright of that article. At that time of it's printing this copyright was not properly noted in the acknowledgements section of the issue. CR.



Dorothy Day on the word "Anarchist"

"The word anarchist is deliberately and repeatedly used in order to awaken our readers to the necessity of combating the 'all-encroaching state,' as our Bishops have termed it, and to shock serious students into looking into the possibility of another society, an order made up of associations, guilds, unions, communes, parishes–voluntary associations of men [sic], on regional vs. national lines, where there is a possibility of liberty and responsibililty for all men."

--Dorothy Day, Catholic Worker, December 1949, cited in Mark and Louise Zwick, The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins (New York: Paulist, 2005).

An Open Letter to Pope Benedict XVI

He'll probably never read it in here but one of the beautiful things about open letters is that even when they are directed at someone specific they are meant for everyone in general, in printing this it's my hope that you reading it will be able to draw something useful from this letter. –CR

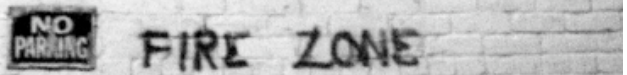
Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, from Malinalco Mexico,

Under the authority of Cannon Law, we as faithful members of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, and in accordance with our knowledge and competence hereby respectfully and humbly submit the following opinion regarding the Church's doctrine on interest.

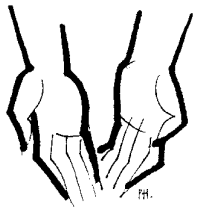
Throughout the history of the Church we have found that two apostles, fourteen councils, eight popes, eight saints, and two scholars have contributed to the development of this doctrine. In summary, they have declared that the charging of any interest on loans is immoral for the following reasons:

1. It is forbidden by the laws of God.
2. It is contrary to the teachings of Christ.
3. It is contrary to the Magisterium of the Church.
4. It is contrary to nature, for it is to live without working.
5. It is exploiting the poor and workers as it is derived from their work and suffering.
6. It is one of the primary causes of poverty throughout the entire world.
7. It is one of the main reasons for the current worldwide unemployment and depression.
8. It is unjust because it is selling money that does not exist.
9. It is harming the church.

We are grateful that our Church has always had a magnificent social doctrine and has raised its voice to protect against social and economic injustice.



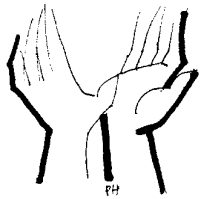
Now unfortunately, most of the bishops, administrators, cannon lawyers and moral theologians no longer believe that interest taking is immoral, or contrary to the Magisterium of our Church



They justify their beliefs through the use of Cannon Law 1284 (6) which makes it obligatory for administrators to invest surplus money.

However, we are not aware of any official changes made by the Holy See to replace the original doctrine condemning usury. Consequently, we humbly beg you to forbid the administrators to ignore the Church's doctrine against taking interest on loans.

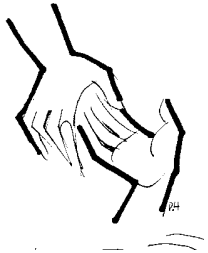
We do this because your predecessor, Pope John XXIII said in Mater et Magistra that "the laity do much to help the diffusion of Catholic Social Doctrine because social doctrine bust be translated into reality and the translation from theory to practice is, of its very nature, difficult."



Therefore, we must, in order to bring Christ's light and love into a world walking in the darkness and in the shadows of death, live up to his teachings:
"You cannot serve God and money. Give the gift as you have been given—without payment. No it is your enemies you must love, and do them good, and lend to them, without any hope of return. Give and it shall be given unto you, pressed down and running over. Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice and all things shall be added unto you without the asking."

In this spirit and with this witness we humbly beg you and all the Bishops to live up to the Church's noble doctrine against usury for the glory of God and the glory of our Church.

In solidarity with Christ,
Estelle and Mario Carota
Barrio de San Juan
Malinalco, Mexico. <

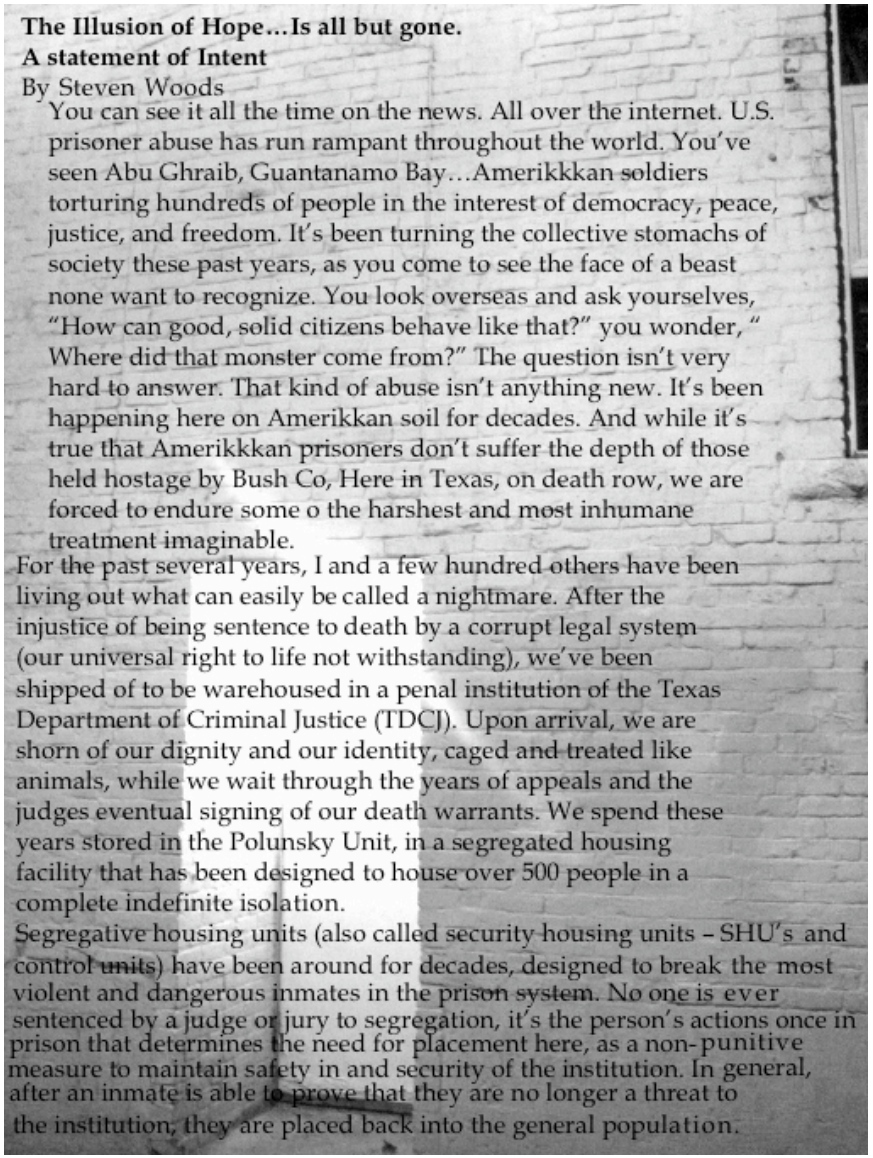


In Poppy Fields
By Chris Rooney
A re-writing of the poem "In Flanders Fields"
By: Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae MD (1872-1918)
Canadian Army

Near Kandahar the poppies blow
And daily, death tolls grow and grow,
Where peace is dead; and in the sky
The jet planes, deafly roaring, fly
Drop bombs amid the guns below.

We are your Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt fear, saw phosphorous glow,
Remembered love, but now we've died
In poppy fields.

Put down these quarrels with your foes:
To you from rotting hands we throw
This hell: it's yours, you can't deny
You've broken faith with us, who've died,
And still don't weep, though poppies grow
Near Kandahar.



The Illusion of Hope…Is all but gone.
A statement of Intent
By Steven Woods

You can see it all the time on the news. All over the internet. U.S. prisoner abuse has run rampant throughout the world. You've seen Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay…Amerikkkan soldiers torturing hundreds of people in the interest of democracy, peace, justice, and freedom. It's been turning the collective stomachs of society these past years, as you come to see the face of a beast none want to recognize. You look overseas and ask yourselves, "How can good, solid citizens behave like that?" you wonder, " Where did that monster come from?" The question isn't very hard to answer. That kind of abuse isn't anything new. It's been happening here on Amerikkan soil for decades. And while it's true that Amerikkkan prisoners don't suffer the depth of those held hostage by Bush Co, Here in Texas, on death row, we are forced to endure some o the harshest and most inhumane treatment imaginable.

For the past several years, I and a few hundred others have been living out what can easily be called a nightmare. After the injustice of being sentence to death by a corrupt legal system (our universal right to life not withstanding), we've been shipped of to be warehoused in a penal institution of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). Upon arrival, we are shorn of our dignity and our identity, caged and treated like animals, while we wait through the years of appeals and the judges eventual signing of our death warrants. We spend these years stored in the Polunsky Unit, in a segregated housing facility that has been designed to house over 500 people in a complete indefinite isolation.

Segregative housing units (also called security housing units – SHU's and control units) have been around for decades, designed to break the most violent and dangerous inmates in the prison system. No one is ever sentenced by a judge or jury to segregation, it's the person's actions once in prison that determines the need for placement here, as a non-punitive measure to maintain safety in and security of the institution. In general, after an inmate is able to prove that they are no longer a threat to the institution, they are placed back into the general population.

The same is not true for us. Despite the provision for a non-segregation status in the Texas Death Row plan (the policy outlining death row housing and general procedure adopted by the director of TDCJ to bring the institution into compliance with Texas State Law), men on death row are never allowed to leave isolation.

And yet, it wasn't always like this. From 1965-1999, we were housed on the Ellis Unit, and afforded almost all of the same privileges that maximum-security general population inmates were allowed. We had art programs, group recreation, the ability to work, walk around un-restrained, had religious services, and televisions. We were generally treated better all around. Since being moved to Polunsky, though, life hasn't been the same. We've been put on 22-hour lockdown. We lost all our group recreation, art programs and supplies (except well paper and color pencils), work programs, televisions, and religious services. We're not allowed contact visits, so the only physical contact we'll get until they kill us is when the CO's hold our restrained arms while escorting us. According to policy, we're supposed to have a chance to have most of that if we're behaving ourselves. TDCJ's non-compliance with their own policy isn't only incredibly immoral, it's also illegal according to the state constitution's clause against cruel and unusual punishment. Why they're allowed to get away with this is beyond me.

The situation we're stuck in leaves a question begging to be asked: What can we do about it? Unfortunately, an answer really isn't forthcoming, the courts, state, and federal government are apathetic, even hostile to us. We've tried lawsuits, please and petitions. Each has been futile, and it has sometimes resulted in further abuse of us and our outside supporters. One of our main problems is that an insufficient number of us speak up about the abuse. As the minds of our captors and their supporters "if they're not speaking up about it, it can't be that bad". Well, speaking up about it intelligently and effectively has been another problem. And even when it's done, our complaints seem to fall on deaf ears. Over the years, we've also tried several civil disobedience movements, ranging from general non-compliance to non-violent resistance to try and get our complaints heard. This, too, to no avail. So if legal remedies and direction aren't helping, what's to be tried next?

To answer that, a few of us have come together out of necessity, realizing that it's going to take more drastic measures to try to compel a change. In this regard, as of October 8, 2006, we've initiated a hunger strike. We will not accept another morsel of food from our captors until such a time as TDCJ makes a credible effort towards the changes necessary to remove the current inhumane conditions. We have several viable request we're making to the administration, dealing with health and safety issues, with policies and procedures being ignored and misinterpreted, and with our segregative housing conditions. It's a shame that we have to starve ourselves to be treated decently. We're hoping we don't have to starve to death, but we cannot allow ourselves to be denied our basic human rights. We cannot, we will not live like this any longer.

Yet even as we take this drastic step to stand against this injustice, we realize our actions alone will not likely bring the changes we require. We need your support in this struggle, fighting with us side by side. The administration will try to cover up and misconstrue our efforts, so we're asking you to get involved, to put up as much effort as you're able. Any actions you can take to help vocalize our plight are positive, be it writing to government officials, TDCJ administration, the media, participation online blogs and forums, protesting if you are able, and encouraging others to get involved. We'll also need your encouragement and solidarity to help keep us from faltering, as even the most stout of heart can waver. The struggle will be long and hard, but in the end, with your help, we hope to succeed.

In strength, struggle, and solidarity,

Steven Woods 999427
Justen Hall 999497
Richard Cobb 999467
Travis Runnels 999505
Kevin Watts 999456
Stephen Moody 999076

For more information on our conditions and to watch the hunger strike progress, check out www.anarchyinchains.com and http://s150445372.onlinehome.us

Ministry, Marginality and Mammon:
some reflections on the church's 'preferential option for the rich' By Kenneth Leech

Text of a final talk to UNLEASH on Wednesday 7th July 2004 at Vaughan House, Westminster England

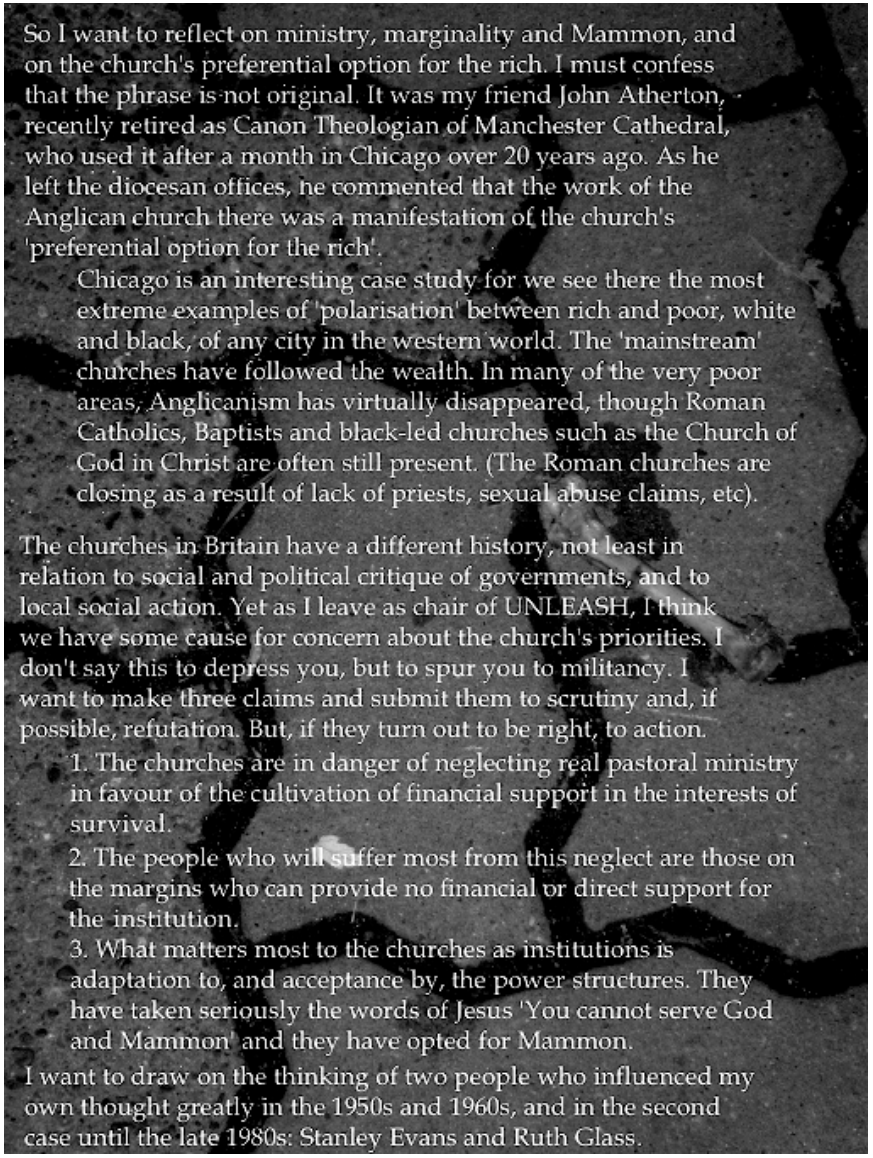
On the 26th June 2004 the New York Times ran an article entitled 'When faith and duty collide'. Police Officer Eduardo Delacruz had refused to arrest a homeless man in November 2002, and, as a result, had been suspended from duty. Soon his fate in the police force will be decided. The reporter David Gonzalez wrote:

> "As someone who believes Jesus Christ can be seen even in the grimy faces of those living in the city's shadows and crawl spaces, Police Officer Eduardo Delacruz says he obeyed a higher authority when he refused to arrest a homeless man in November 2002."

The story took me back to an earlier one, also in the USA, the story of Keith McHenry of the Food Not Bombs organisation in San Francisco, who had, between 1988 and 1994, been arrested 92 times for giving food to homeless people, contrary to local legislation (See Appendix).

I read the New York Times article as I was wading through thousands of papers, preparing to leave East London, trying to decide what to throw out. One of the papers I found was the Report to the City Deanery Synod on the proceedings of the General Synod meeting in February 2004, written by Mrs Sarah Finch, a person entirely unknown to me. Mrs Finch, who represents London on the General Synod, took exception to one of the new collects of the Church of England, that for the 2nd Sunday of Christmas, in which Christians pray that God 'would lead us to seek [Jesus] among the outcasts and to find him in those in need'. This, she said, 'undermined the gospel by encouraging the idea of salvation by good works'. It is interesting to see the illogical jump, for the collect says nothing about 'works', but about seeking and finding, about presence. (Though Matthew 25:40, presumably the source of the offending collect, does focus on works: 'just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me').

Here we have two conflicting visions of the church, of the gospel, and, I suspect, of God. And what is shown in these two snaps is a microcosm of the Christian world.


So I want to reflect on ministry, marginality and Mammon, and on the church's preferential option for the rich. I must confess that the phrase is not original. It was my friend John Atherton, recently retired as Canon Theologian of Manchester Cathedral, who used it after a month in Chicago over 20 years ago. As he left the diocesan offices, he commented that the work of the Anglican church there was a manifestation of the church's 'preferential option for the rich'.
Chicago is an interesting case study for we see there the most extreme examples of 'polarisation' between rich and poor, white and black, of any city in the western world. The 'mainstream' churches have followed the wealth. In many of the very poor areas, Anglicanism has virtually disappeared, though Roman Catholics, Baptists and black-led churches such as the Church of God in Christ are often still present. (The Roman churches are closing as a result of lack of priests, sexual abuse claims, etc).
The churches in Britain have a different history, not least in relation to social and political critique of governments, and to local social action. Yet as I leave as chair of UNLEASH, I think we have some cause for concern about the church's priorities. I don't say this to depress you, but to spur you to militancy. I want to make three claims and submit them to scrutiny and, if possible, refutation. But, if they turn out to be right, to action.
1. The churches are in danger of neglecting real pastoral ministry in favour of the cultivation of financial support in the interests of survival.
2. The people who will suffer most from this neglect are those on the margins who can provide no financial or direct support for the institution.
3. What matters most to the churches as institutions is adaptation to, and acceptance by, the power structures. They have taken seriously the words of Jesus 'You cannot serve God and Mammon' and they have opted for Mammon.
I want to draw on the thinking of two people who influenced my own thought greatly in the 1950s and 1960s, and in the second case until the late 1980s: Stanley Evans and Ruth Glass.

Much of what they predicted has come true, many of their insights have been lost, most of what they said is more relevant today than when they said it. So in tribute to them I want to use their work as a way of looking at ministry, marginality and Mammon.

Evans, an Anglican priest, spent most of his ministry in East and South London. He wrote a good deal but the book which is most relevant to our concerns is very small: The Church in the Back Streets (Mowbray 1962), Only 50 pages long, it is a classic, rooted in his experience in the inner city. He coined the term 'the Church Condescending' as a way of describing how good, dedicated people moved into poor areas to minister to (rather than with) those whom they saw as belonging to a lower culture.

Inevitably they saw themselves as missionaries sent to a people of a lower culture, and they can hardly be blamed that they became the executive officers of the Church Condescending. Yet for all that, it is the bitter fruits of the Church Condescending , with all its kindness and desperate desire to do good, that we have inherited . . . An intelligent man [sic] could have prophesied the reaction of those whose fate it was to be done good to (p 5).

These people were there to 'be done good to'. Evans went on to point out that at a certain stage, when 'these stupid, ungrateful people don't come', the Church Condescending turns into the Church Indignant.

The Church Condescending has given birth to the Church Indignant . . . Does it need to be pointed out that here is nemesis; that at this point a long process has reached its tragic conclusion; that once you reach the stage of despising people, your attitude to them has ceased to be Christian at all, and that you had best haul down your flag and pack your bags, for you have no function left to fulfil? (p13).

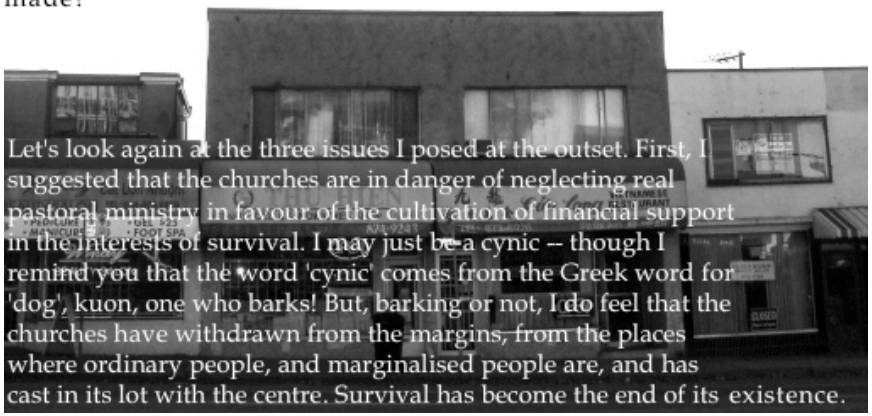
That syndrome is still alive and well. In his book he stressed the central place of argument, debate and local theological engagement. Every local church needed to be a thinking church, constantly grappling with issues 'from street crossings to hydrogen bombs'. Is this still happening, or have we fobbed it off to Boards for Social Responsibility (which the Archbishops' Council seems keen to abolish). And he stressed the danger of substituting respectability for militancy.

'The Church Respectable can do many things but it cannot convert'. How right he was. As I re-read Evans over 40 years on, I wonder how much progress we have made.

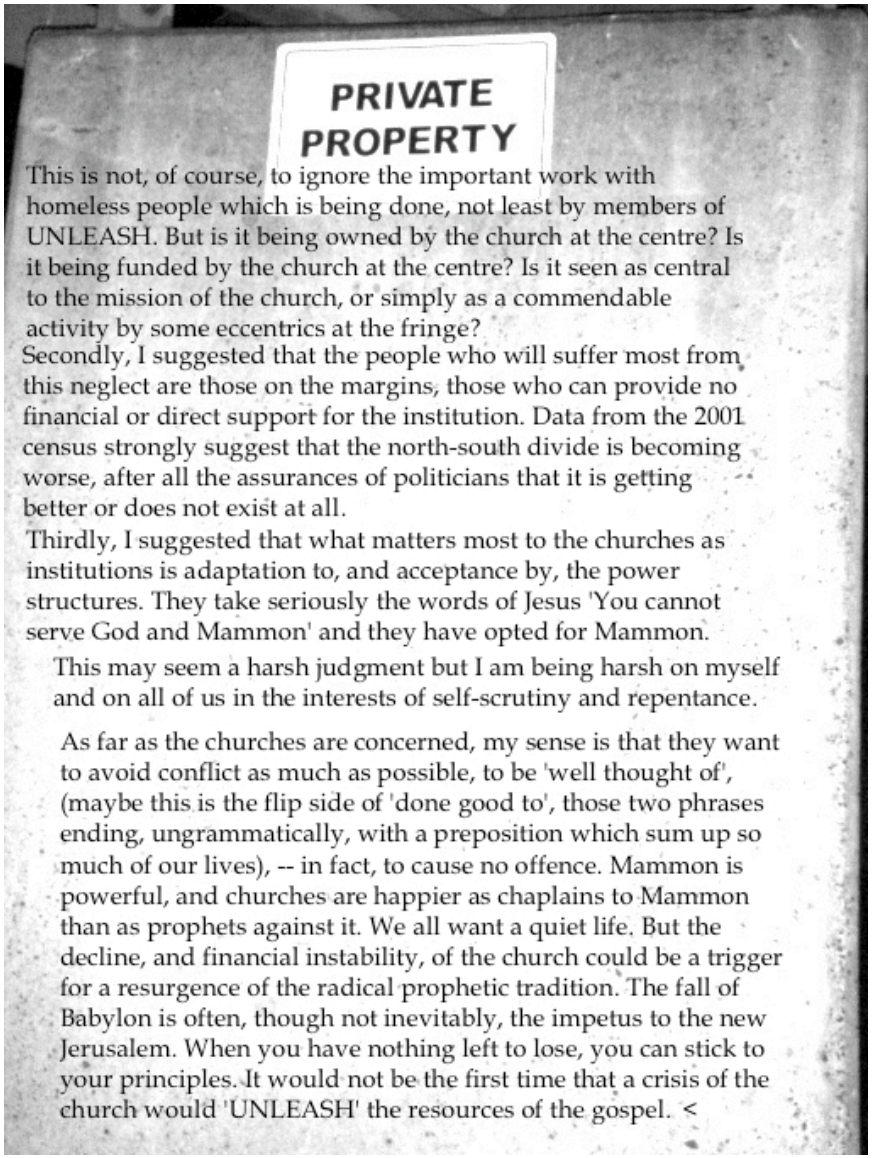
Ruth Glass was an atheist, a Marxist, a refugee from Nazi Germany, and the pioneer of urban sociology in Europe. She taught urban studies at University College, London, for many years, and is famous for having coined the word 'gentrification'. Most sociologists refer to her first use of the word in 1964, but I have an unpublished study by her of North Kensington housing in 1959 where she uses the word 'gentrified'. It took some thirty years for people to realise what she was saying: that there was a real danger that poor people and people in middle income groups would be squeezed out of parts of Inner London which would become ghettoes of the wealthy or of the intelligentsia. This has now happened.

She also warned, in the early 1960s, of the likelihood that there would be a growth in the numbers of 'marginal men', including homeless people, in Inner London, and that social polarisation would increase. This has also now happened.

In an essay on 'Conflict in Cities', dated 1966, she predicted that there would be riots or uprisings in many cities before 1984, and warned people who were concerned with justice that 'aloofness from conflicts does not lead to their comprehension'. Ruth was, in Gramsci's terms, an 'organic intellectual', one who put her intellectual work at the service of the local communities in their struggles for justice and equality. Her refusal to stay aloof from conflicts is now not common among academics who are looking over their shoulders for funding and for 'tenure'. Again, how much progress have we made?



Let's look again at the three issues I posed at the outset. First, I suggested that the churches are in danger of neglecting real pastoral ministry in favour of the cultivation of financial support in the interests of survival. I may just be a cynic -- though I remind you that the word 'cynic' comes from the Greek word for 'dog', kuon, one who barks! But, barking or not, I do feel that the churches have withdrawn from the margins, from the places where ordinary people, and marginalised people are, and has cast in its lot with the centre. Survival has become the end of its existence.



This is not, of course, to ignore the important work with homeless people which is being done, not least by members of UNLEASH. But is it being owned by the church at the centre? Is it being funded by the church at the centre? Is it seen as central to the mission of the church, or simply as a commendable activity by some eccentrics at the fringe?

Secondly, I suggested that the people who will suffer most from this neglect are those on the margins, those who can provide no financial or direct support for the institution. Data from the 2001 census strongly suggest that the north-south divide is becoming worse, after all the assurances of politicians that it is getting better or does not exist at all.

Thirdly, I suggested that what matters most to the churches as institutions is adaptation to, and acceptance by, the power structures. They take seriously the words of Jesus 'You cannot serve God and Mammon' and they have opted for Mammon.

This may seem a harsh judgment but I am being harsh on myself and on all of us in the interests of self-scrutiny and repentance.

As far as the churches are concerned, my sense is that they want to avoid conflict as much as possible, to be 'well thought of', (maybe this is the flip side of 'done good to', those two phrases ending, ungrammatically, with a preposition which sum up so much of our lives), -- in fact, to cause no offence. Mammon is powerful, and churches are happier as chaplains to Mammon than as prophets against it. We all want a quiet life. But the decline, and financial instability, of the church could be a trigger for a resurgence of the radical prophetic tradition. The fall of Babylon is often, though not inevitably, the impetus to the new Jerusalem. When you have nothing left to lose, you can stick to your principles. It would not be the first time that a crisis of the church would 'UNLEASH' the resources of the gospel. <

Appendix

CITY CRIMINALIZES FOOD NOT BOMBS BY CHANGING ORDINANCE
City and County of San Francisco, Recreation and Park Dept.
(affixed the seal of city and county of SF)
July 20, 1990
Mr. Keith McHenry
Food Not Bombs

Dear Mr. McHenry:

On July 19,1990 at the 649th Regular Meeting of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission, the Commission heard and discussed an item on its Permit and Reservations policy. The semi-annual review of the Permits and Reservations Policy is mandated by Resolution 15585, which states:

"The commission directs the General Manager and staff to continue to evaluate the viability of these regulations and to ascertain whether this scheme strikes the proper balance between the recreational, Constitutional, and property interest of San Franciscans heretofore mentioned and the Commission's substantial interest in preserving park property, limiting excessive noise and conjestion [sic] and other police problems that may result from activities on park property'.

Contained within Resolution 15585 is Section I, Subsection IV: Regulations Governing Distribution of Free Food to the Homeless on Park Property This section details the terms and conditions necessary to obtain a permit to distribute free food on park property. It also contains a listing of the sites the Commission deems appropriate for this type of activity.

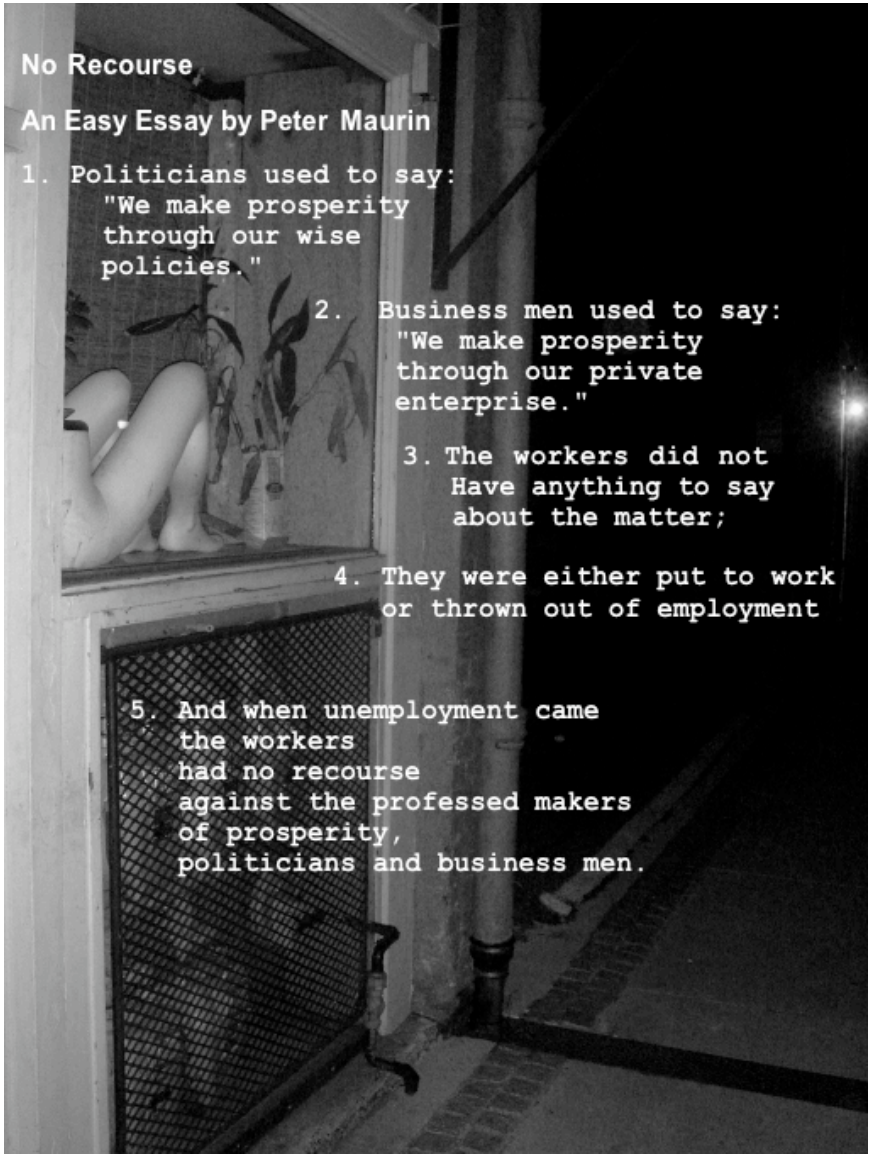
Prior to the July Meeting of the Commission there were two sites deemed appropriate for free food distribution on Recreation and Park property. These sites were

CIVIC CENTER PLAZA and the INTERSECTION of PAGE AND STANYAN streets in Golden Gate park. [where Food Not Bombs served food from 1990 through October1994]

Mr. McHenry, please be advised that on July 19, 1990 the Recreation and Park Commission voted to amend the Permitsand Reservations Policy and delete the section of the policy that allows free distribution of food in parks. This amended policy will not allow staff to issue any subsequent permits to any organization for the purpose of free food distribution on any park site.

If you have any questions concerning this issue, please feel free to contact me. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Mary E. Burns
General Manager
(signed)



Daily Prayer of the co-workers of Mother Theresa

Make us worthy Lord, to serve our brothers and sisters throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace, that where there is hatred, I may bring love; that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness; that where there is discord, I may bring harmony; that where there is error, I may bring truth; that where there is doubt, I may bring faith; that where there is despair, I may bring hope; that where there are shadows, I may bring light; that where there is sadness, I may bring joy.

Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted; to understand than to be understood; to love than to be loved; for it is by forgetting self that one finds; it is by forgiving that one is forgiven; it is by dying that one awakens to eternal life.

Amen.

We Believe So We Speak
2nd Corinthians 4:13

The Catholic Worker Statement and the excerpt from the press release are reprinted from the website of the Desmoines Catholic Worker www.desmoinescatholicworker.org

Tavis Dodds is a roving activist, philosopher and contributor to the Christian Radical blog, he was recently involved with David Arthur Johnston and the right to sleep struggle in Victoria, Canada. His article has also been printed in The Republic.

The open letter to Pope Benedict XVI was originally mailed to the Toronto Catholic Worker where Chris Rooney transcribed it and posted it to the blog last August.

Peter Maurin was co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement with Dorothy Day. His Easy Essays still appear in Catholic Worker papers world wide.

Steven Woods is currently serving a death sentence at a Federal prison in Texas. He has a blog at www.anarchyinchains.com If you would like to write to Steven you can send mail to Steven Woods #999472 Polunsky Unit 3872 FM 350 S Livingston, TX 77351.

Kenneth Leech is an Anglican priest and Christian socialist. He served in urban London parishes afflicted by poverty and confronted issues of racism and drug abuse. He co-founded the Jubilee Group in 1974 and is an advocate of contextual theology. His article is reprinted with his permission from www.anglocatholicsocialism.org

The cover art and the picture of Jesus tied to a tank were both done by Kevin Larmee, the photos in this issue were taken by Chris Rooney in East Van and the Downtown East Side, all the other images in this zine are from radicalimages.org, coifs.org, and Google.

Karl Germyn presently lives in Vernon with his cat, Tom. He maintains a blog at www.livejournal.com/users/rhykan and he'll kick your ass at Dungeons & Dragons. He is co-editor of The Christian Radical.

Chris Rooney lives in Vancouver Canada. A member of the Catholic Worker movement, he is the other editor of The Christian Radical and maintains a personal blog at http://wasp-water.blogspot.com/ He can be reached at **the.christian.radical.zine@gmail.com**

LAND.REGISTRY

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This issue is dedicated to the inmates of the Polunsky Unit of Texas Death Row, particularly Steven Woods, Justen Hall, Richard Cobb, Travis Runnels, Kevin Watts, and Steven Moody. God keep and sustain you through your hunger strike our prayers are with you.

Chris Rooney and Karl Germyn